

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 138

May 22, 1996, 2:57 p.m.
Page S-5480 Temp. Record

BUDGET RESOLUTION/Entitlements and Accurate Cost-of-Living Indices

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1997-2002 . . . S. Con. Res. 57. Simpson/Moynihan amendment No. 4003.

ACTION: AMENDMENT AGREED TO, 100-0

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. Con. Res. 57, the Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1997-2002, will balance the Federal budget in fiscal year (FY) 2002 by slowing the overall rate of growth in spending over the next 6 years to below the rate of growth in revenue collections. The rate of growth in entitlements such as Medicare, Medicaid, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, and the Earned Income Credit will be slowed. No changes will be made to the Social Security program, the spending for which will grow from \$348 billion in FY 1996 to \$467 billion in FY 2002. Defense spending will be essentially frozen at its present level.

The Simpson/Moynihan amendment would express the sense of the Senate that, "the assumptions underlying this budget resolution include that all Federal spending and revenues which are indexed for inflation should be calibrated by the most accurate inflation indices which are available to the Federal Government." The amendment would also make three findings, including that Federal Government usage of inflation indices which overstate true inflation has the demonstrated effect of accelerating Federal spending, increasing the Federal budget deficit, increasing Federal borrowing, and thereby enlarging the projected burden on future American taxpayers.

Those favoring the amendment contended:

The Simpson/Moynihan amendment is necessary to put Senators on record as supporting the principle that the most accurate inflation indices possible should be used when determining Federal spending that is indexed to inflation. Without making any comment about the accuracy of the current indices, every Senator should at least admit that if the inflation rate is overstated for spending programs the result is that billions of dollars in extra cost-of-living allowances are erroneously paid, tax brackets are not

(See other side)

| YEAS (100) | | | | NAYS (0) | | NOT VOTING (0) | |
|----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Republican (53 or 100%) | | Democrats (47 or 100%) | | Republicans (0 or 0%) | Democrats (0 or 0%) | Republicans (0) | Democrats (0) |
| Abraham | Helms | Akaka | Inouye | | | | |
| Ashcroft | Hutchison | Baucus | Johnston | | | | |
| Bennett | Inhofe | Biden | Kennedy | | | | |
| Bond | Jeffords | Bingaman | Kerrey | | | | |
| Brown | Kassebaum | Boxer | Kerry | | | | |
| Burns | Kempthorne | Bradley | Kohl | | | | |
| Campbell | Kyl | Breaux | Lautenberg | | | | |
| Chafee | Lott | Bryan | Leahy | | | | |
| Coats | Lugar | Bumpers | Levin | | | | |
| Cochran | Mack | Byrd | Lieberman | | | | |
| Cohen | McCain | Conrad | Mikulski | | | | |
| Coverdell | McConnell | Daschle | Moseley-Braun | | | | |
| Craig | Murkowski | Dodd | Moynihan | | | | |
| D'Amato | Nickles | Dorgan | Murray | | | | |
| DeWine | Pressler | Exon | Nunn | | | | |
| Dole | Roth | Feingold | Pell | | | | |
| Domenici | Santorum | Feinstein | Pryor | | | | |
| Faircloth | Shelby | Ford | Reid | | | | |
| Frist | Simpson | Glenn | Robb | | | | |
| Gorton | Smith | Graham | Rockefeller | | | | |
| Gramm | Snowe | Harkin | Sarbanes | | | | |
| Grams | Specter | Heflin | Simon | | | | |
| Grassley | Stevens | Hollings | Wellstone | | | | |
| Gregg | Thomas | | Wyden | | | | |
| Hatch | Thompson | | | | | | |
| Hatfield | Thurmond | | | | | | |
| | Warner | | | | | | |

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

properly indexed, and the deficit is increased. If the indices are largely overstated, the extra costs can run into the hundreds of billions of dollars. Many Senators, and virtually all economists, believe that the current inflation indices are largely overstated. However, many Senators are reluctant to do anything about it, because then the President and other Senators may accuse them of taking benefits away from such people as Social Security recipients. Therefore, to ease Senators into gradually facing reality, we have offered this amendment to put them on record as favoring accurate indices and as understanding the danger of inaccurate indices. We hope we can get a unanimous vote for this amendment, as a prelude to a serious, nonpartisan examination of this issue.

No arguments were expressed in opposition to the amendment.